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Above Ground Domestic Oil Tank Installation Guidelines

Regulations may vary depending on where you live. These are guidelines only and apply to domestic oil storage tanks up to 3500 litres. They do not apply to larger tanks or non-domestic storage, such as churches or village halls.

Protecting the Environment

Installations near a river, well or any controlled water must be bunded. However, to minimise the risk of pollution, we strongly recommend using a bunded oil tank at all times.

Tank Location

Tanks are required to comply with fire separation distances in order to protect the stored fuel from a fire or heat source which may originate nearby.

Tanks should be sited:

- 1.8m away from non-fire rated eaves of a building;
- 1.8m away from a non-fire rated building or structure (e.g. garden sheds);
- 1.8m away from openings (such as doors or windows) in a fire rated building or structure (e.g. brick built house/garage)
- 1.8m away from oil fired appliance flue terminals;
- 760mm away from a non-fire rated boundary such as a wooden boundary fence;
- 600mm away from screen (e.g. trellis and foliage) that does not form part of the boundary.

If it is impossible to comply with these requirements, then a fire protection barrier with at least 30 minutes fire rating should be provided. A minimum separation distance of 100mm is required between the tank and the fire rated barrier.

The Base

The tank must be installed on a firm, smooth concrete base built in accordance with good building standards and engineering principles. The base should be adequate for the weight of the tank and large enough to extend 300mm beyond all sides of the tank. The tank must not be sited tight against a wall or similar structure.

If an oil tank is inadequately supported, the tank itself can be weakened, leading to eventual failure and the escape of the stored fuel. During the life of an installation of an oil storage tank, the base will need to provide continual structural support, even though ground conditions may alter from season to season and year to year.

Building Regulations

Oil storage tank installations need to comply with regional Building Regulations. In England and Wales OFTEC Registered Technicians can self certify their own work without involving Local Authority Building Control. If you use someone who is not registered with a "Competent Person" scheme, then you will have to obtain a Building Control Notice and arrange an inspection. Similar rules apply in Scotland, where you may need to apply for a warrant.

For more information on Competent Persons, visit www.competentperson.co.uk

Annual Inspection

Oil storage tanks installations should be inspected annually.